Appointment of LPG Dealers in Uttar Pradesh

*274. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had published any advertisement last month for the appointment of LPG dealers in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the districts in Uttar Pradesh for which no advertisement was published; and

(d) the reasons for not appointing any LPG dealers in these districts where common man faces hardships in getting LPG cylinders?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Public Sector Oil Marketring Companies (OMCs) have advertised 144 new LPG distributorships in the State of Uttar Pradesh on 7.9.2007 and the last date for receipt of applications was 19.10.2007.

(c) and (d) OMCs have reported that these 144 locations fall in 61 districts of Uttar Pradesh out of a total of 17 districts in the State. The districts in Uttar Pradesh for which no advertisement was published are:—

1. Azamgarh
2. Balia
3. Mau
4. Chitrakoot
5. Badaun
6. Aligarh
7. Bulandshahr
8. Etawah
9. Mathura

LPG distributorships are set up by OMCs at locations on commercial considerations based on technical evaluation/survey. OMCs have not advertised in these 9 districts as presently setting up of new LPG distributorship was not found to be feasible.

Oil Exploration in Mahanadi Basin

*275. SHRI BHAGIRATHI MAJHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATUAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the running projects and pending proposals for oil and natural gas exploration in Orissa;

(b) whether there has been a proposal for setting up oil exploration on the bank of Mahanadi river;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (d) Government has so far awarded 14 exploration blocks (one onland and thirteen offshore blocks) in Mahanadi basin in and around Orissa.

Oil India Limited (OIL) is presently carrying out hydrocarbon exploration works in the onland block (MN-ONN-2000/1), awarded under second round of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP-II), OIL is the operator in this block with a participating interest of 40% while other public sector undertakings (PSUs), India Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOC), GAIL (India) Ltd. and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) are partners in this block with a 20% participating interest each. OIL has already completed the first phase of work and carried out acquisition, processing and interpretation (API) of 463.68 Ground Line Kilometres (GLK) of 2D seismic data against the commitment of 200 GLK of 2D seismic. The block is now in the second phase of the exploration period and OIL is planning to drill one well in Mahanadi onland basin in the district of Cuttack.

In addition, Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) are carrying out hydrocarbon exploration in 13 blocks in offshore areas of Mahanadi basin. Minimum Work Program commitment in first phase of exploration is 65,390 km of 2D seismic, 12,900 sq.km of 3D seismic and 12 exploratory wells.

ONGC has made two gas discoveries in Mahanadi offshore as a result of exploratory efforts.

India Infrastructure Development Fund

*276. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Centre has promised to provide a corpus of Rs. 100 crore, named as India Infrastructure Development fund, to provide up to 75 per cent of the development costs of a project till the bidding stage, to assist the States in preparing Public-Private partnership projects for the infrastructure sector;

(b) whether this proposal was a part of the Budget for 2007-08 and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has already given its approval; and

(c) if so, what are these projects in the States for which Government has allocated funds so far?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A revolving fund with a corpus of Rs. 100 crore to accelerate the pace of preparation of a shelf of bankable projects which can be offered to private investors through competitive bidding was announced by the Finance Minister in the Budget Speech 2007-08. The scheme to operationalise India Infrastructure Project Development fund scheme is in the initial stage of implementation. Approval of CCEA is not required.

(c) No allocations have been made so far.

Opening of Pilot Training Institutes

†*277. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken any steps to meet the shortage of pilots in Civil Aviation Sector in the country and has also taken decision to open new training institutes;

(b) if so, the locations of these training institutes to be opened and the number of pilots to be trained in these institutes every year;

(c) whether Government has formulated any long term scheme keeping in view the demand of pilots in Civil Aviation Sector in the country; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.